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PHILISTINISM.*

A series of sermons preached last winter which evoked no little criticism at the time is here given to the reading public. The aim cannot be better expressed than in the words of the preface: "They were called forth by the repetition in our city, during the winter, of certain onslaughts upon Christianity which are notorious for their telling expression of the crude and coarse scepticism which many circumstances combine to make popular at present. My aim in this course. . . . was to go over the grounds along which the more sweeping attacks are being made against religion; in order to indicate, to those who might follow me, the actual situation, and to aid my hearers in discriminating between the indefensible positions which a reverent reason may call upon us to abandon, and the true strategic lines which are not even uncovered by the forces of a raw rationalism."

The author's line of argument is that the attacks of this crude scepticism are directed not upon the Bible and Christianity, but upon false conceptions of the teachings of the Bible and of the fundamental truths of Christianity which have grown up in the popular religious mind. The real offence consists in this, that the sceptic, having demolished these misinterpretations of the Bible, thinks he has demolished the Bible itself, and that, as he has shown the absurdity of the misconceptions of Christian truth in the minds of many Christians, he supposes he has left nothing at all of Christianity.

The author's counter-charge sweeps away boldly and unceremoniously many common conceptions of fundamental Christian doctrines, and then proceeds to show that the doctrines themselves have not even been touched by the attack, and that they are incontestable facts witnessed to by the human mind in all ages, whether they can be explained by man or not.

Many, if not most, Christian readers will refuse to follow him into all his positions, but it cannot be denied that the argument is exceedingly suggestive and stimulating.

EDERSHEIM'S PROPHECY AND HISTORY.†

This is a timely book. It handles questions now occupying the foreground of theological discussion. Whether there is in the Old Testament any true prophecy, and what is its nature; whether any Messianic hope from the beginning, and whether Jesus fulfilled this hope; whether there were any Mosaic institutions at all; whether we are to speak of the Law and the Prophets, or the Prophets and the Law; whether, of Moses and the Prophets, or the Prophets and the Priests. These, together with the Messianic hope of the period from the closing of the Old Testament Canon to the advent of Christ, are the topics of these lectures.

Dr. Edersheim's position as an evangelical and conservative scholar of unusual learning, especially in Jewish literature, is so well attested by his Life and

* *PHILISTINISM, Plain Words Concerning Certain Forms of Modern Scepticism.* By R. Heber Newton, Rector of All Souls' Protestant Episcopal Church, New York City. New York and London: *G. P. Putnam's Sons.* 5x7. Pp. ix, 332. \$1.00.

† *PROPHECY AND HISTORY IN RELATION TO THE MESSIAH.* The Warburton Lectures for 1880-84, with two Appendices on the Arrangement, Analysis and Recent Criticism of the Pentateuch, by Alfred Edersheim, M. A., Oxon., D. D., Ph. D., author of the *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah.* New York: *A. D. F. Randolph & Co.* Pp. xxiv, 391. Size, 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ x6 $\frac{1}{2}$. \$2.50.

Times of Jesus the Messiah, that his utterances on these questions cannot fail to be of interest and authority. He holds to the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch, and gives many keen thrusts at the theory of Wellhausen. The difficulties of that theory are presented; the complete unlikelihood of such a literary mosaic as Wellhausen regards the Pentateuch; the absurdity of the final redactor leaving so many contradictions, if these really existed; why also was the Priest-code introduced as the law of Moses, if differing so from legislation already received as Mosaic? or if introduced, why was the older, antiquated code retained? why called Mosaic? why inserted in the Pentateuch? The laws and arrangements of the Pentateuch relative to trade, property and the administration of justice and attendance upon the feasts, are shown also to be foreign to the circumstances of Israel at any other time than that of their entrance into Canaan. But of special value are Dr. Edersheim's views on prophecy and the relation of the Old Testament to the New, and his emphasis of the idea of the kingdom of God. "The whole Old Testament is prophetic. Special predictions form only a part, although an organic part of the prophetic Scriptures." (P. 24.) The prophet is not a mere foreteller of future events; prophecy is not identical with prediction. Nor on the other hand is the prophet a mere teacher, one who admonishes and warns. Nor is there yet a combination of these two elements, the predictive and parabolic, but a welding of them into one. The prophet occupies the divine standpoint, where there is neither past, present, nor future. (P. 126.) All prophecy has also the moral and spiritual elements as its basis and essential quality. Prophets foretold not only what came to pass, but in order that it might not come to pass. (Pp. 140, 152.) Dr. Edersheim is thus seen to be no narrow literalist in his interpretation of prophecy. He belongs to that school which find in the Old Testament ideas which have repeated and successive fulfillments in the unfolding of God's purpose and plan. "The fundamental idea does not change, but it unfolds and applies itself under ever-changing and enlarging circumstances, developing from particularism into universalism; from the more realistic preparatory presentation to the spiritual which underlay it and to which it pointed; from Hebrewism to the world-kingdom of God." (P. 185.)

We regret that these views on prophecy were not presented in a more scientific form with copious illustrations from Scripture. Had this been done, this work would have become a standard of permanent value. Now, since the lectures are given as delivered over a period of four years, it is marred by diffuseness and repetition and a lack of unity. Indeed it is partially a treatise on the Pentateuchal question and partially on Messianic prophecy. No full outlines of the lectures are given, and there is no index. These are serious deficiencies.

THE HEBREW FEASTS.*

Biblical criticism of solid value depends upon a fair, honest and thorough examination of the subject studied. Absolute freedom from bias may be an impossibility, but when a theory like that of Wellhausen is under consideration, treating, as it does, with the make-up of the entire Old Testament, not the tendency of the theory, but the facts of the theory must be candidly sifted and

* THE NEWTON LECTURES for 1885. THE HEBREW FEASTS in their relation to recent hypotheses concerning the Pentateuch. By William H. Green, Professor in Princeton Theological Seminary. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. \$1.50.